

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-11 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 DODE-00 /057 W
-----115553 091206Z /43
R 071153Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMDNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7300
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NDJAMENA 2208

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, ICRC, CD
SUBJECT: ICRC OPERATION IN CHAD

SUMMARY. RED CROSS REPRESENTATIVES BRIEF EMBASSY ON
EMERGENCY RELIEF OPERATION IN NORTHERN CHAD.

1. MICHEL GRATTINI AND DELEGATE JEAN-DAVID CHAPPUIS
TODAY OUTLINED TO DCM CHADIAN RELIEF OPERATION BEING
CONDUCTED BY RED CROSS IN NORTH OF COUNTRY. THEY ESTIMATE
BETWEEN 2,000 AND 2,500 PERSONS, INCULDING 400 CIVILIANS,
ARE BEING SUPPORTED THROUGH EMERGENCY RELIEF OPERATION
WHICH SUPPLIES 40 TONS OF FOODSTUFFS PER MONTH PLUS
CLOTHING AND BLANKETS. CHAPPUIS ESTIMATES COST OF
CONTINUING AT CURRENT LEVEL TO BE 2 MILLION SWISS FRANCS PER
THREE MONTH PERIOD. THIS WOULD COVER LOCAL PURCHASES,
TRANSPORTATION AND OVERHEAD/OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES.

2. THERE ARE NOW THREE TWO-MAN TEAMS (INCLUDING
TWO DOCTORS AND TWO NURSES) PLUS A RADIO OPERATOR
AND A QUOTE TRACING UNQUOTE OFFICER STATIONED IN THE
NORTH WITH A HEADQUARTERS STAFF OF SIX IN NDJAMENA.
GIVEN THAT THERE ARE NO MORE DIRECT RELIEF SUPPLY
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OPERATIONS FROM NDJAMENA AND THAT BOTH TRANSPORTATION
AND COMMUNICATION LINKS MUST OPERATE INDIRECTLY,
THE ICRC IS PLANNING TO REDUCE ITS NDJAMENA STAFF TO
THE MINIMUM NECESSARY FOR MAINTAINING LIAISON FUNCTIONS.
FROLINAT HAS FORBIDDEN DIRECT FLIGHTS FROM NDJAMENA
TO FAYA LARGEAU AND FOR THE LAST THREE WEEKS THE GOC
HAS NOT GIVEN ITS ACCORD FOR RELIEF FLIGHTS OPERATING

VIA THIRD COUNTRIES. FORTUNATELY, ACCORDING TO THE RED CROSS, LIBYAN MERCHANTS HAVE RESPONDED TO THE MARKET POTENTIAL IN NORTHERN CHAD AND A NUMBER OF THEM HAVE MOVED INTO THE AREA. THE ICRC WAS ABLE TO COMPLETE PURCHASE OF 12 TONS OF SUPPLIES IN THE BARDAI AREA LAST WEEK, WHICH AMOUNTS TO ABOUT A 45 DAY STOCK FOR THE VARIOUS CAMPS SUPPLIED FROM THAT CENTER.

3. THE CHADIAN RELIEF OPERATION CLOSED ITS MAY BUDGET WITH A DEFICIT OF 350,000 SWISS FRANCS. CHAD IS NOW INCLUDED AMONG THE SIX AFRICAN COUNTRIES FOR WHICH THE ICRC HAS BROADCAST A SPECIAL EMERGENCY APPEAL. TO ENSURE CONTINUATION OF THE CURRENT OPERATION AND CONSTITUTE THE REQUIRED THREE MONTH STOCKS IN THE CENTERS OF FAYA LARGEAU, FADA AND BARDAI REQUIRES AN IMMEDIATE FUNDING OF APPROXIMATELY 1 MILLION DOLLARS. IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE CASH IN HAND TO CARRY OUT THE LOCAL PURCHASE OPERATION, SINCE MERCHANTS WILLING TO SUPPLY GOODS ON THE SPOT INCUR INCREDIBLY HIGH TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND DEMAND SPOT CASH PAYMENT.

R. THE ICRC REPS FEEL THAT HIGH LOCAL PRICES IN THE LONG RUN WILL NOT ENTAIL LARGER PER CAPITA COSTS THAN WOULD PURCHASES IN NDJAMENA PLUS AIR TRANSPORT COSTS TO THE NORTHERN REGION FOR THE MONTHLY SHIPMENT OF 30 TONS OF FEED GRAINS AND AND 10 TONS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MISCELLANEOUS FOODSTUFFS SUCH AS COOKING OIL, DRIED TOMATOES, DRIED FISH, DRIED OKRA, ETC.

5. FROLINAT AND THE CHADIAN GOVERNMENT BOTH APPEAR TO ACCEPT THE CARE AND FEEDING OF PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES AS A SERIOUS OBLIGATION, HOWEVER, LOCAL POLITICS CONTINUE TO INTERFERE. NO DIRECT OR INDIRECT AIRLINKS NOW EXIST BETWEEN THE TWO. RED CROSS RADIO COMMUNICATIONS NOW ARE ROUTED FROM FAYA LARGEAU TO GENEVA TO NDJAMENA AND RETURN, AN INCREDIBLY CIRCUITOUS ROUTING FOR THE NORMAL 500 MILE TRANSMISSION. FROLINAT LEADERSHIP HAS EVEN DISTRIBUTED A CIRCULAR TO LOCAL CHIEFS WHICH REPRODUCES KEY PORTIONS FROM THE THIRD GENEVA ACCORD, BUT IMPLEMENTATION IN THE FIELD SOMETIMES FALLS SHORT OF GOOD INTENTIONS BY THE LEADERSHIP.

COMMENT. THE FATE OF THE 2,500 PRISONERS AND CIVILIANS PROBABLY IS LINKED DIRECTLY TO OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE, BECAUSE IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT SOUTHERN CHADIANS UNDER CONDITIONS OF CONFINEMENT COULD EXIST ON THE SCANT RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THIS DESERT AREA, EVEN THOUGH

FROLINAT COMBATANTS SUBSIST ON LITTLE MORE THAN A HANDFUL OF DATES A DAY. CHAPPUIS SAYS THAT THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE LATEST ICRC APPEAL FOR AFRICA HAS BEEN A SCANT 700,000 DOLLARS. SINCE LIBYA IS NOT WILLING TO ADMIT ANY DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY AND FROLINAT DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES OF ITS OWN TO CARE FOR ITS CAPTIVES, AS REQUIRED BY THE GENEVA AGREEMENT, THERE SEEMS A REAL LIKELIHOOD THAT INNOCENT VICTIMS MAY SUFFER. THE EMBASSY, THEREFORE, URGES THE DEPARTMENT TO EXPLORE ANY AVAILABLE HUMANITARIAN ALTERNATIVES TO HELP THE RED CROSS RESPOND. BRADFORD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RELIEF, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NDJAME02208
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780241-0603
Format: TEL
From: NDJAMENA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780686/aaaacwcm.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9a355e90-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2455262
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ICRC OPERATION IN CHAD SUMMARY. RED CROSS REPRESENTATIVES BRIEF EMBASSY ON EMERGENCY RELIEF OPERATION IN NORTHERN CHAD.
TAGS: SREF, CD, ICRC, FROLINAT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9a355e90-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014